

# NEWS

## Payette National Forest

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Release of Earl Dodds' Book, "Tales from the Last of the Big Creek Rangers" in Electronic Form

**McCall, ID** - The Payette National Forest is pleased to announce the release of Earl Dodds' book, "Tales from the Last of the Big Creek Rangers" in electronic form. The book is available online at the Payette National Forest website at:

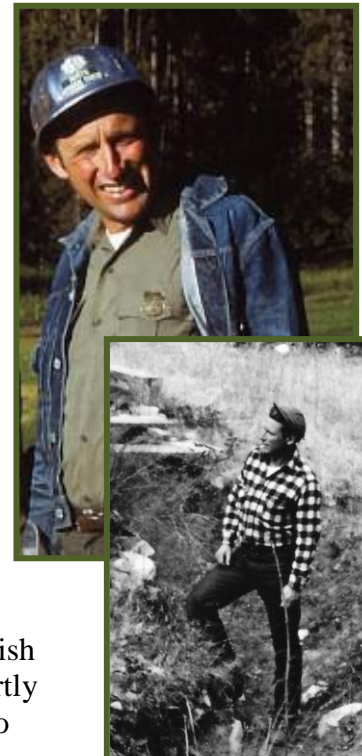
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/payette/learning/history-culture>

Earl Dodds served as the Big Creek District Ranger on the Payette National Forest for over 25 years from 1958 until his retirement in 1984. In his retirement he has written a collection of short stories related to his experiences as a "back county" district ranger. The collection of short stories is very telling of the early years of the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness and as such, the Heritage staff of the Forest published Dodds' stories in soft bound and electronic form. "As we don't have a great deal of money available for publishing documents, we decided to make the book available to the public online," said Gayle Dixon of the Payette Heritage Program.

Earl's tales are a fun read about how the Forest Service used to accomplish work in the Primitive Area of central Idaho in the days prior to, and shortly after the Congressional action that formed the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness. It also provides a colorful insight into the personalities of "backcountry men" such as John Vines who was a WWI fighter pilot, a San Francisco restaurant owner, and finally an isolated hermit who lived in a single-room cabin 23 miles down Big Creek in the wilderness. Earl's intent was to provide some of his "recollections" for future generations and to help preserve this important period of Forest Service history.

"Earl's heart is in this stretch of backcountry that we fondly remember as the Big Creek Ranger District, and I encourage you to take pleasure in his reflections of his years during the time that he served as a leader and a mentor of our beloved backcountry," said Ed Allen a retired Forest Service employee who worked with Dodds for a number of years.

The Big Creek Ranger District was formed in 1958 by combining the Chamberlain District with the Big Creek District and encompassed nearly 800,000 acres. In 1984, the Big Creek District was combined with the Krassel Ranger District which now manages over a million acres including 800,000 acres of the Frank-Church River of No Return Wilderness.



Top photo of Earl in 1972 at Big Creek. Bottom photo of Earl in 1957 at Cottonwood Creek.

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